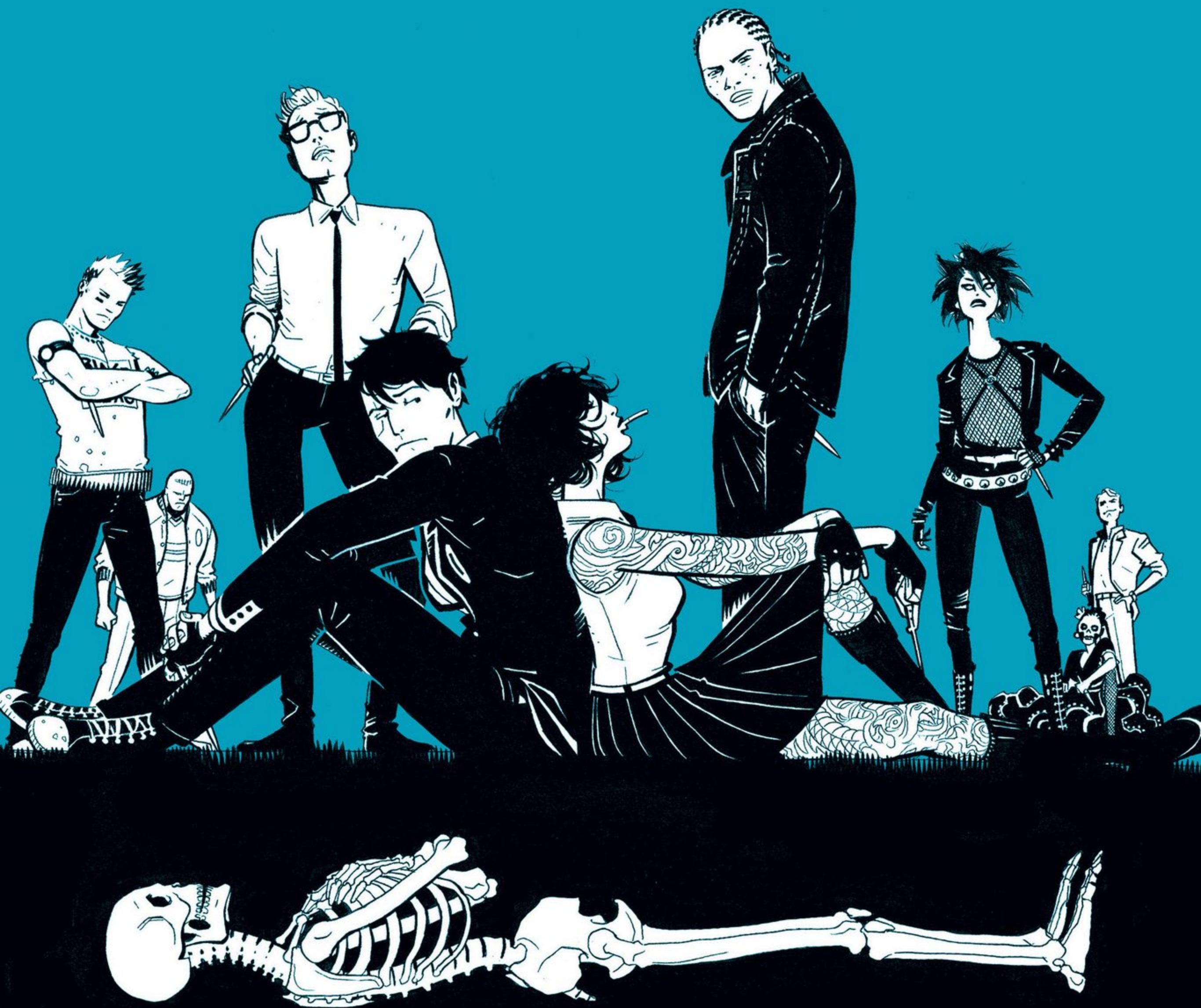


REMENDER • CRAIG • LOUGHRIDGE

DEADLY CLASS™



1987



#1 • \$3.50

RICK REMENDER • story
WES CRAIG • art
LEE LOUGHRIDGE • color
RUS WOOTON • lettering + design
SEBASTIAN GIRNER • editor

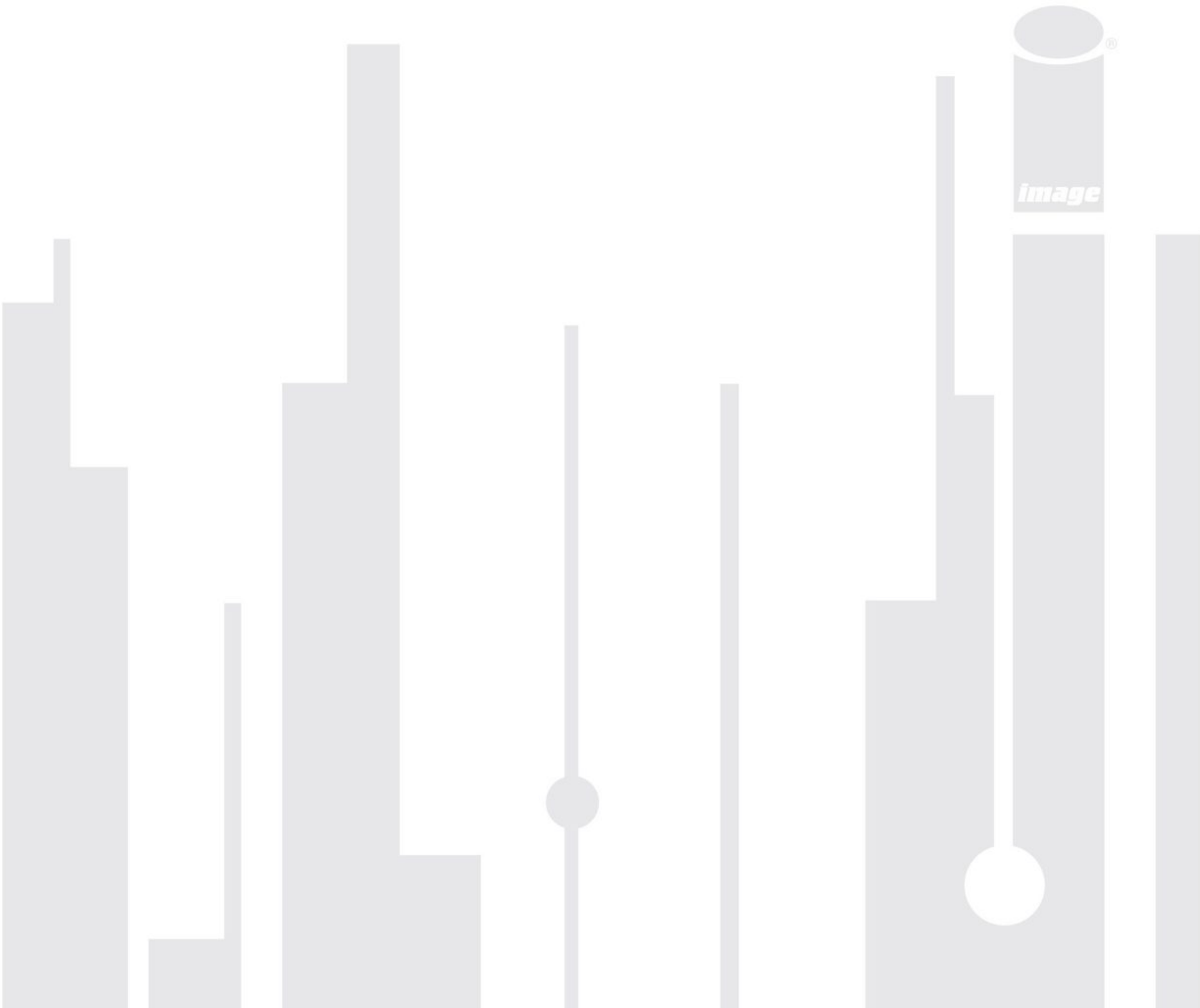
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JANUARY, 1987
SAN FRANCISCO

A POSITIVE MENTAL
ATTITUDE IS ESSENTIAL TO
SURVIVING OUT HERE.





PARANOID LATELY.

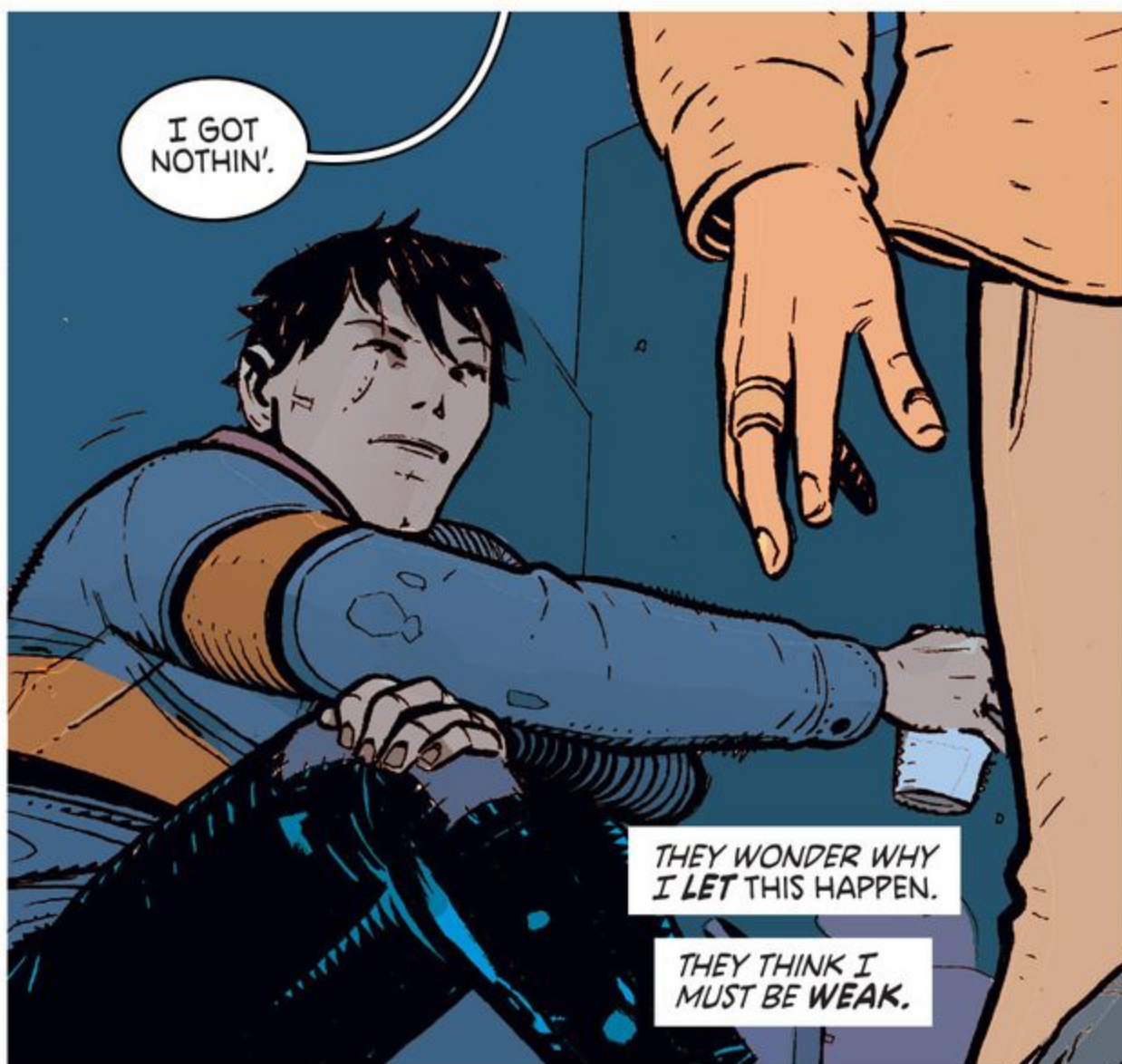
FEEL LIKE I'M
BEING WATCHED.

BUT NOBODY SEES
ME. NOT REALLY.



THEY LOOK
THROUGH ME.

ANYTHING
HELPS.



I GOT
NOTHIN'.

THEY WONDER WHY
I LET THIS HAPPEN.

THEY THINK I
MUST BE WEAK.



SO, YOU
IN?

EASIEST FIVE
HUNDRED
BUCKS I EVER
MADE.

CAN'T IMAGINE THEY
COULD END UP HERE.



SOMEONE WALKING BY THEM,
IN THEIR SHANTY HOME,
IGNORING THEIR EXISTENCE.

IT'S JUST WAY EASIER TO
JUDGE THE POOR THAN
TO BE CHARITABLE.



EASIER TO THINK I'VE DONE
SOMETHING TO **DESERVE** THIS.

AND IN MY
CASE---



MAYBE
THEY'RE
RIGHT.

FEBRUARY 6



TODAY'S MY BIRTHDAY.

I GOT PNEUMONIA. PRETTY TRADITIONAL GIFT FOR A KID'S FOURTEENTH, RIGHT?

IT'S ALSO GOOD PRESIDENT RONALD FUCKING REAGAN'S BIRTHDAY.

SOME IRONY.

STILL, BETTER TO SHARE IT WITH THE GIPPER THAN WITH CHIP'S FISTS AND MRS. RANKS' STALE DING-DONGS OF GUILT.

SCO
Blender

ANYTHING HELPS.



HERE. JUST WHAT YOU NEED.



HELPING ME TO HELP MYSELF.



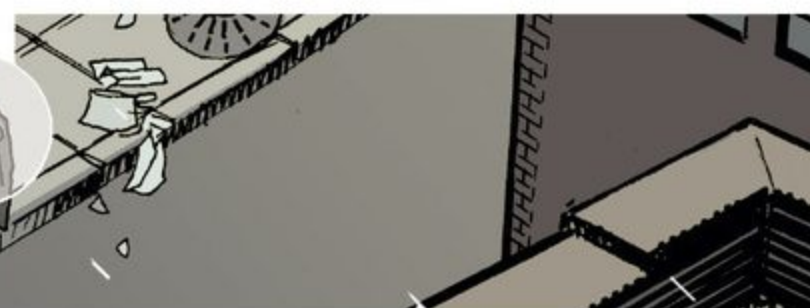
LESSON LEARNED, DICKHEAD.



THE BAD VOICE TELLS ME TO GET HIS ADDRESS OFF THE DRIVER'S LICENSE.

PAY HIM A VISIT.

THE BAD VOICE IS WINNING.



AND SOMEONE IS WATCHING ME.



MARCH 13

I HATE THE WINTER.

JACKET SOAKED BY ICY MIST.

I KEEP LOOKING FOR A POSITIVE SIDE TO SLEEPING ON DAMP, COLD CONCRETE.

BUT IT'S NOT THE COLD KEEPING ME AWAKE TONIGHT.

IT'S THE DREAMS OF SUNSHINE.

SEEING THE TWO OF THEM AGAIN MAKES THE COLD THAT MUCH HARDER TO BEAR.

MARCUS LOPEZ ARGUELLO, HE HAD TO CHANGE HIS NAME AFTER WE CAME HERE, SO I TOOK IT.

HE WAS A COP.

A COP WHO WAS TRICKED INTO HELPING REAGAN'S C.I.A. SMUGGLE ARMS TO THE CONTRAS.

THE SANDINISTAS BLEW UP OUR HOME IN PAYMENT.

I WAS FIVE WHEN WE FLED NICARAGUA.

WE WERE GIVEN REFUGE HERE, IN SAN FRANCISCO.

AFTER YEARS OF TURMOIL MOM AND DAD WERE FINALLY HAPPY.

I TRIED TO BE AS WELL.

BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TERRIFIED OF THE FUTURE.

EVEN BACK THEN, I COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IGNORED SO SKILLFULLY.

WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE.

AND BAD THINGS ARE WAITING AROUND EVERY CORNER.

BUT IN THE END...

...IT DIDN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.

...ALL OF THAT ANXIETY...

...ALL THAT WORRYING ABOUT THE FUTURE...

REAGAN CUT FUNDING TO U.S. MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES.

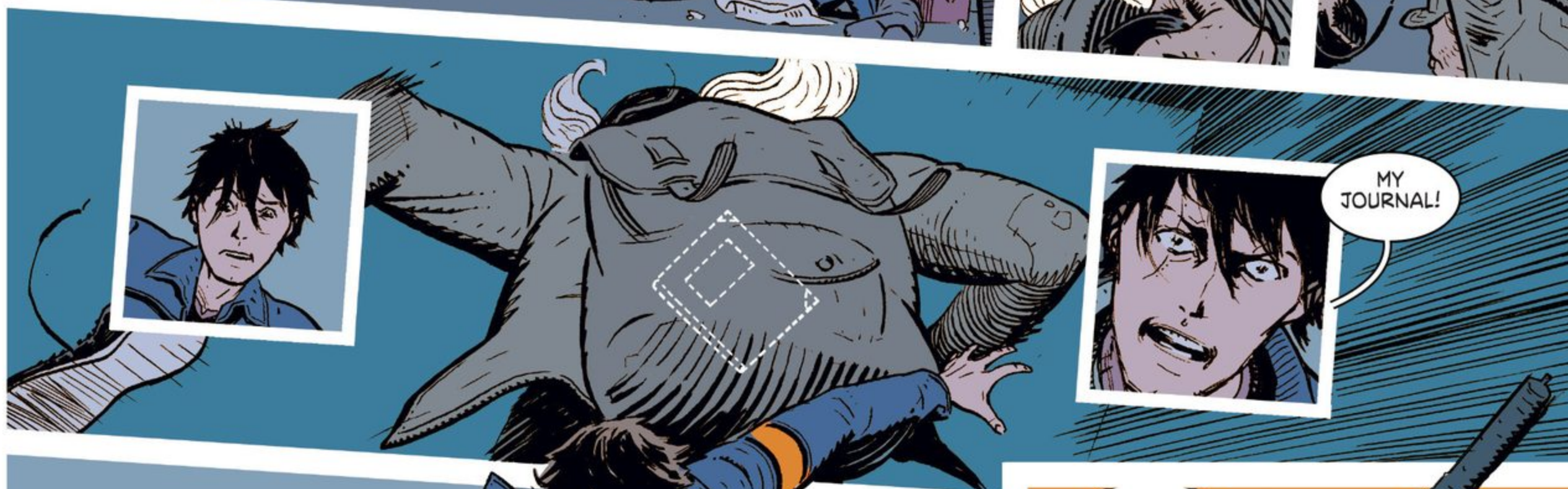
RELEASING HUNDREDS OF MENTALLY ILL ONTO THE STREETS.

INCLUDING BARBARA SALINGER, SUICIDAL SCHIZOPHRENIC.

BARBARA SALINGER, WHO MADE EVERY FEAR I EVER HAD COME TRUE.



APRIL 22





JUNE 28

HAPPINESS IS JUST THE
ABSENCE OF PAIN.

IT'S THE BEST I
CAN HOPE FOR.



THAT GUY WHO TOOK MY
SHOES, I SAW SOMETHING
TERRIFYING IN HIS EYES.

SAW MY FUTURE.

HE'S WHAT I
HAVE TO LOOK
FORWARD TO.



DON'T SEE ANY
REASON TO KEEP
THIS UP.

AUGUST 7



I'M NOT RELIGIOUS.

I LEARNED ALL I
NEEDED TO KNOW
ABOUT RELIGION
AT THE BOYS' HOME.

SITTING IN THE BASEMENT
WATCHING A GROUP OF
CHRISTIANS MAKING
FUN OF MORMONS.

AS IF ONE RELIGION IS
LESS CULTISH AND FULL OF
SHIT THAN THE OTHER.

I LAUGHED AND TOLD THEM
THIS MUST BE WHAT JEWS DID
BEHIND CHRISTIANS' BACKS
WHEN THEY WERE THE NEW
CULT ON THE BLOCK.

THEY DIDN'T THINK IT WAS FUNNY.



JUST ONE OF MANY
REASONS I DON'T
BELIEVE IN GOD.

BUT I'M
A FUCKING
HYPOCRITE.

BECAUSE WHEN THINGS
GET BAD ENOUGH...

...I PRAY FOR HELP.



AND TONIGHT
THINGS ARE
BAD.



AND I **NEED** HELP.



NEED **SOME** REASON
TO KEEP FIGHTING.

NO MATTER HOW HARD
I TRY, THE BAD VOICE
WON'T REST.

AND I'M LOSING
THE FIGHT.



DON'T...

"LIFE IS A SERIES
OF UNIQUE
OPPORTUNITIES."

"IT'S OUR JOB TO
FIND THE HAPPINESS
IN EACH ONE."



"THIS ISN'T A
DRESS REHEARSAL,
MARCUS."

"YOU ONLY GET
THE ONE TURN."



ALRIGHT, PAPA.
I'LL TRY.



DAY OF THE DEAD IN THE MISSION DISTRICT IS SOMETHING ELSE.

PAPA BROUGHT ME HERE WHEN I WAS 5.

SCARED THE SHIT OUT OF ME.

NOT NEARLY AS MUCH AS THE HALLUCINATING VAGRANT SLEEPING NEXT TO ME LAST NIGHT.

SUCKING ETHER ON A RAG. SCREAMING.



HE FLIPPED OUT--HELD ME AT KNIFEPOINT--TOLD ME I WAS BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE.

THAT I COULD "SEE."

THE SMELL.

LIKE HE WAS ALREADY DEAD.



ETHER, PLAQUE, CIGARETTES, BOOZE, URINE, AND BODY ODOR.



HE TOLD ME ABOUT HIS EX-GIRLFRIEND.



SHE'D DIED FOR EIGHT MINUTES.

WHEN SHE RECOVERED HE ASKED HER WHAT IT WAS LIKE.



SHE TOLD HIM TO DESCRIBE "BLUE".













WHO ARE YOU?

NOT NOW.

THAT'S HIM!

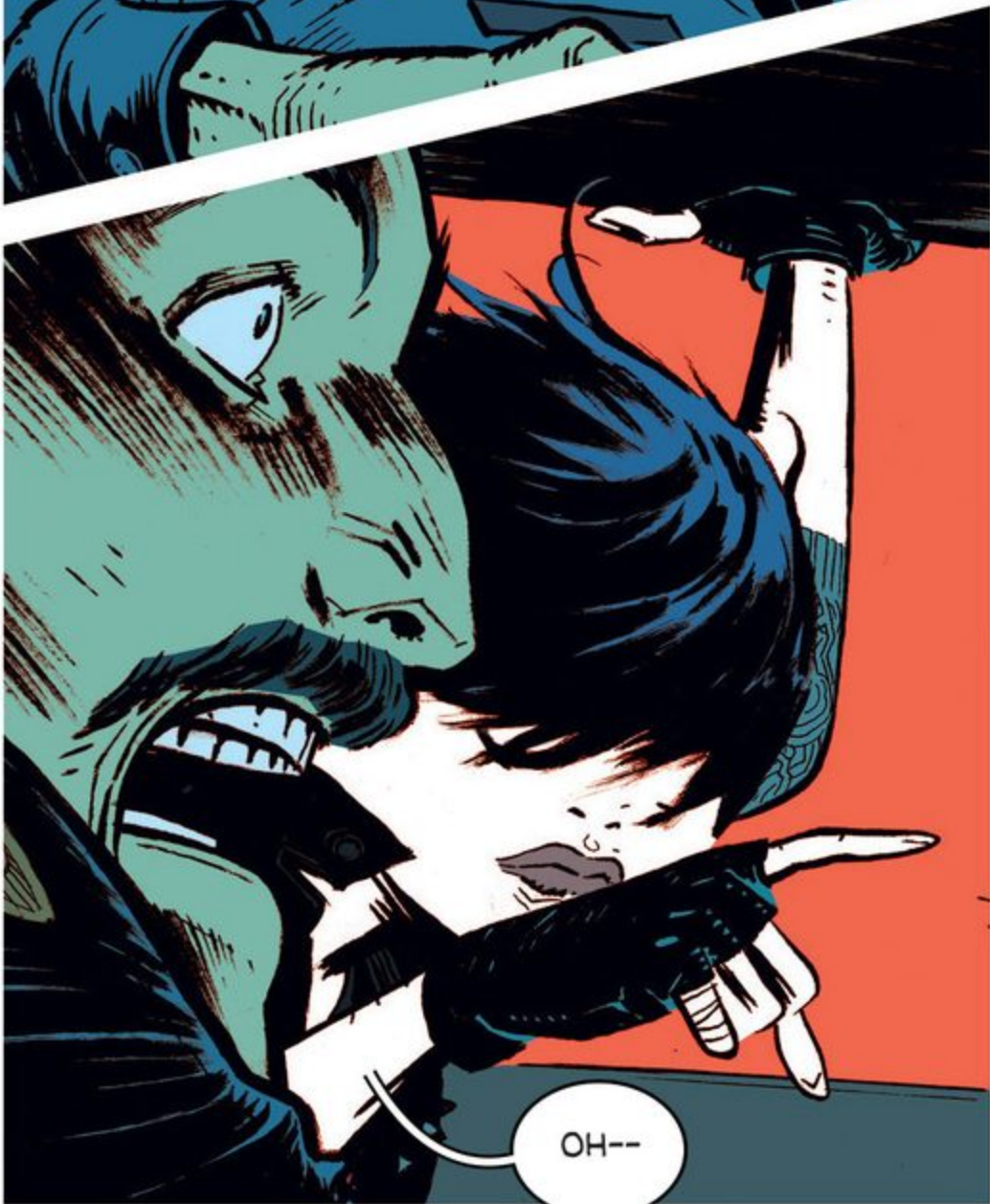
COPS!

IS THAT WHAT THOSE ARE CALLED?

LEARN SOMETHING NEW EVERY DAY.









OH SHIT
OH SHIT
OH--





JESUS---

OH, JESUS---

THE FUCK IS GOING ON?

DEAL WITH IT LATER--

JUST GET UP AND--

YERAGH--!

LEG IS FUCKED.

TOO BAD.

GET UP--GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE--

BEHIND ME--

FOOTSTEPS.

HE DOESN'T GIVE A WARNING.

DOESN'T TELL ME TO FREEZE.

HE JUST OPENS FIRE.

BLAM!

SPAK

I DON'T WANT TO DIE--

PLEASE--

PLEASE, GOD.



PEEK-A-BOO,
SNOWFLAKE.



PLEASE...

I-I
SURRENDER.



SURRENDER?
NO-NO-NO, YOU
GOT IT ALL WRONG,
YOU *VILE* PIECE
OF *SHIT*.



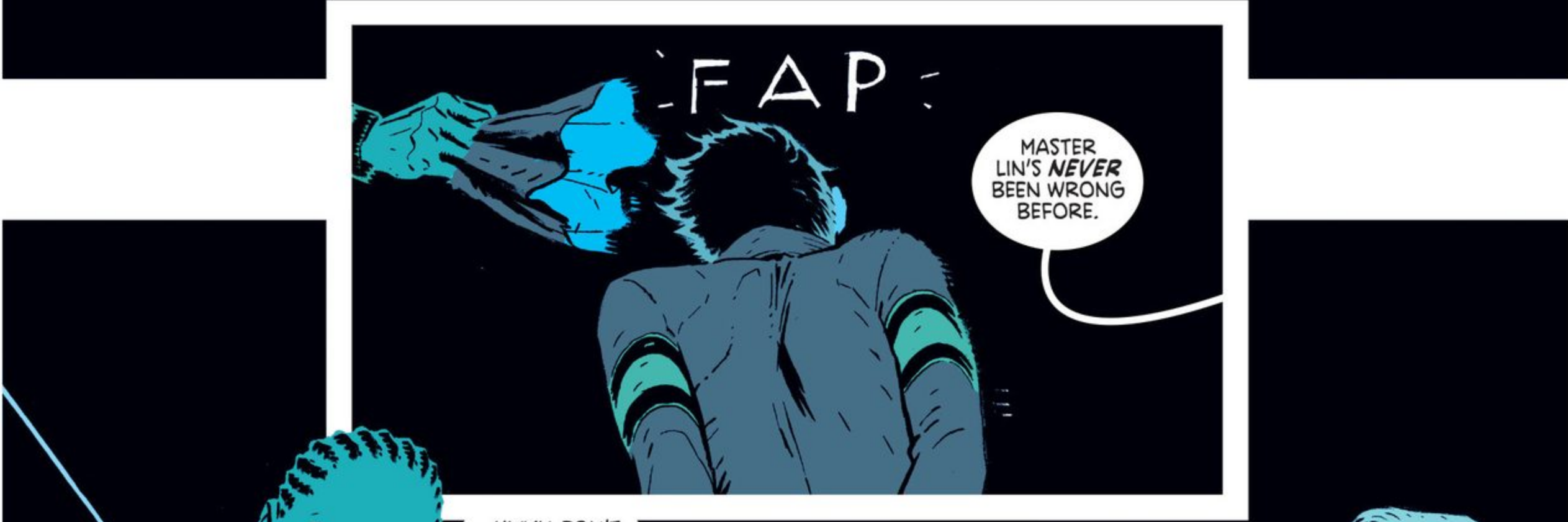
YOU
DON'T GET
A TRIAL.

DON'T
GET TO BE
FAMOUS.

ALL YOU
GET IS A
FUCKING
BULLET IN
YOUR--









TELL ME, MARCUS, ARE YOU *SATISFIED* WITH YOUR LIFE?



I EAT *SHIT*, SLEEP IN *GARBAGE*, AND FIGHT *CRAZY PEOPLE* FOR SHOES.

SO, YEAH-- IT'S *EXACTLY* PERFECT, WHAT I ALWAYS DREAMT OF.

THE *FUCK* DO YOU CARE?



YOU'VE MADE QUITE A NAME FOR YOURSELF.

UNFORTUNATELY THERE ARE *FEW* WHO SEE YOUR PARTICULAR PROFICIENCY AS AN *ATTRIBUTE*.

BUT I *DO*.



I'M HERE TO OFFER YOU A CHANCE TO USE YOUR NATURAL PREDILECTIONS TO *ACHIEVE* SOMETHING IN THIS WORLD.

LIKE *WHAT?*



I WOULD LIKE TO TRAIN YOU TO BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST *ASSASSINS*.

SURROUNDED BY OTHERS LIKE YOU.

IN A PLACE WHERE YOU WILL BE SAFE FROM *THEIR* LAWS.



A HITMAN?

MAN, THAT... THAT JUST SOUNDS INSANE.

I MEAN, LOOK, I APPRECIATE YOU HELPING ME OUT--



--BUT I'M *NOT* THE GUY YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.



UNTIE HIM.

FUCKING JERK-OFF.

TOLD YOU.







...YOU MAY
YET SURVIVE
KING'S DOMINION
SCHOOL OF THE
DEADLY ARTS.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Growing up, my family moved about every two or three years to a new neighborhood, meaning I had to start over and make new friends every couple of years. Always the new kid, always the kid nobody knew anything about. It was difficult. Kids are vicious.

By the time I was in 8th grade, I had been living in the same area for a couple of years and had made a good group of friends. I was living in downtown Phoenix and the Los Angeles punk/skate scene had sort of blended into the subculture there. So we spent most of our time skateboarding, listening to punk rock and, in my case, reading comic books and drawing.

That was 1987, the year that cooked me into the person I am today. So, it's probably no coincidence that it's also the year that Marcus entered the strange and frightening Kings Dominion School for the Deadly Arts.

One week before high school, my family moved again, this time to a small town an hour south of Phoenix, right in the middle of the desert, where, as a punker kid, I did not exactly fit in. So the first couple of years of high school for me were spent being endlessly fucked with by rednecks, jocks, and hillbillies in a foreign place far from home. Basically until I turned 16 when I got my driver's license and left home.

High School was always a perfect magnification of my lifelong feeling that I don't belong anywhere. Overtime, after I got back to Phoenix, I reconnected with a group of friends that felt like home. We were the kids out behind

the gym, being disenfranchised, and smoking weed between class (remember when high schools had a smoking area?). We were the outcasts and freaks, the punkers, the goths, skaters, hip-hop kids, dropouts, gear-heads, all the colors of the freak rainbow.

Phoenix was a violent place in the late 80s/early 90s, and standing out in a city like that led to numerous beatings, stabbings and shootings amongst my friends. I've seen a man shot in the head, I had a friend shot in the back while trying to flee a gunfight, had a friend overdose on heroin before he shot himself in the head, another was stabbed, and I was personally jumped and brutally beaten by gang-bangers twice.

Violence was just something you got used to being around.

So, I wanted to explore that time in my life and the impressions high school, coupled with that violence, left on me. I wanted to explore the idea of that meanness and that drama and that feeling of being ostracized and disconnected with some real-life danger, a magnification of what it was for me growing up.

DEADLY CLASS is a pure collaboration, so there's also a lot of my co-creator Wes Craig and editor Sebastian Girner in there as well. We spent countless hours on the phone beating this thing into shape and cooking up new characters before Wes realized them in his own visual language while making them all entirely authentic to the era.

When you see Wes draw skate rats bombing the streets of San Francisco, they look like the skate rats you knew in the mid-80s. When you see a Goth girl or a Straightedge kid, or Stoners, or a Metal-head or a Rockabilly kid... they are authentic. And those pages, my lord, Wes is a superstar of art jive and disco dreams.

Lee Loughridge and I spent an entire night drinking scotch, talking over how he was going to approach the colors. It's really the fun of making creator-owned books, sitting around with a friend, working together to make something new.

Then we all worked with Rus Wooton who cooked up our very striking and distinct logo and lettering style and--pres-to: the comic you now hold in your hands.

This story takes place in a recognizable world. There's no magic. No spaceships. No one can fly or shoot eye beams. It's a coming of age story about broken kids expected to deal with a violent world. It's the 80s. No cell phones or email. And many of these stories are based on true events.

I've never tried anything quite like this before.

And I've never had so much fun making a comic.

Hard to believe 1987 was 27 years ago. It's a good thing for me I never grew up, or that might make me feel old.

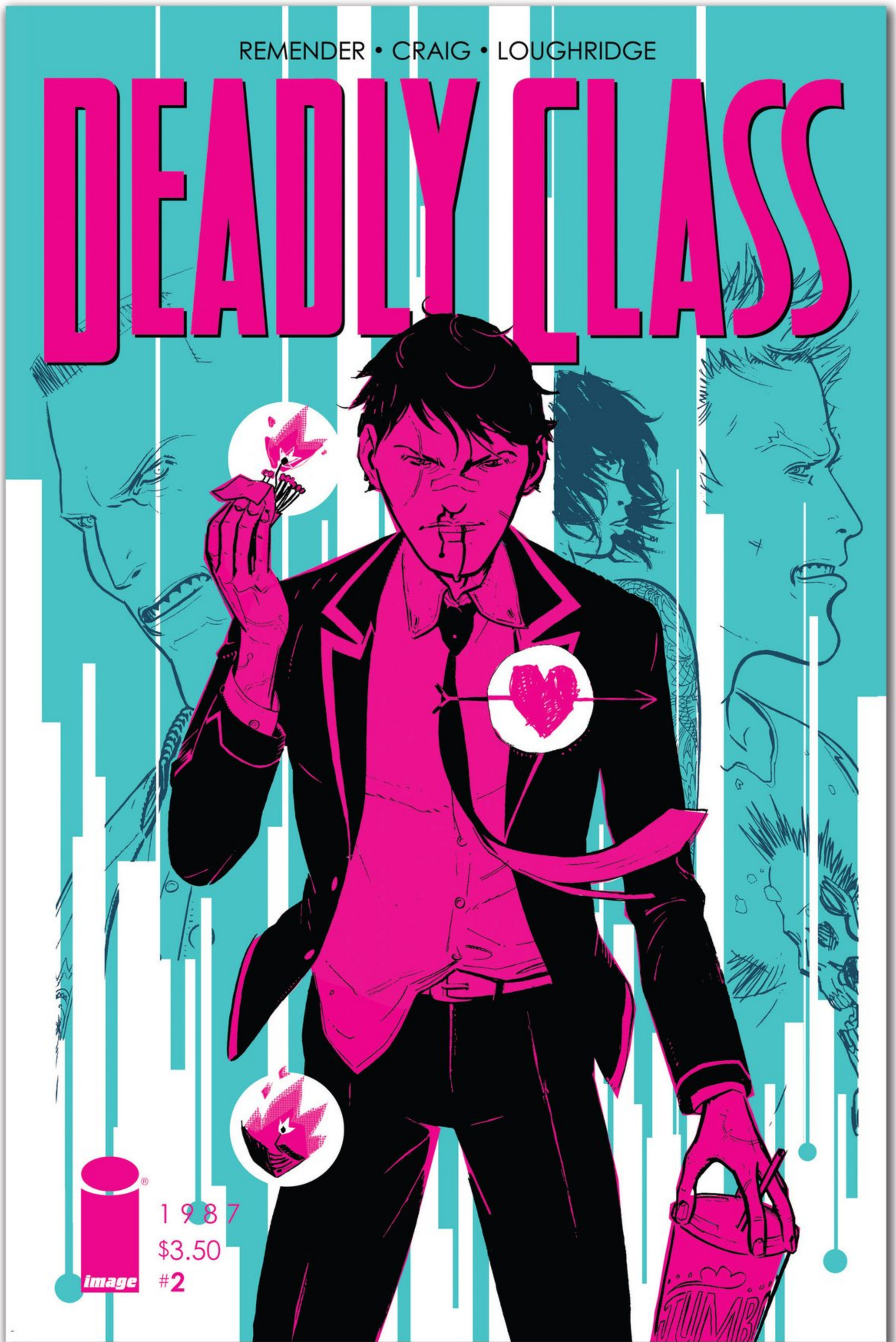
See you in 30 days,

Rick Remender

NEXT MONTH

REMENDER • CRAIG • LOUGHRIDGE

DEADLY CLASS



1 9 8 7
\$3.50
#2

HOLLOW BROTHERHOOD



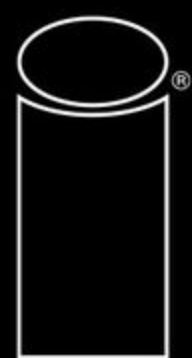
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UNDERTOW

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BRANDON GRAHAM

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